



Tanya Lane
Acting Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING – GOAL SETTING SESSION

Conference Room L-101 Lower Level – Town Hall
8:15 A.M.

January 16, 2016

Mayor Zartarian called the special meeting to order at 8:20 a.m. on January 16, 2016.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Anest
Councilor Budrejko
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor Manke
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Serra
Mayor Zartarian

Staff Attendees

Tanya Lane, Acting Town Manager
Ann Harter, Director of Finance
Karen Futoma, Director of Human Services
Dianne Stone, Senior Center Director
Steve Clark, Chief of Police
Paul Boutot, CIO
Tom Molloy, Highway Superintendent
Bill DeMaio, Parks and Rec/Grounds Superintendent
Andy Brecher, Development Director
Lisa Masten, Library Director
Jaime Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA

Hal Whitney - Old Hatchery Lane, Mr. Whitney expressed concern about the state of many Town roads and inquired about the repair funding and schedule.

John Slusarski – 40 Grandview Drive, Mr. Slusarski stated concern about the underfunding pension in the upcoming budget.

Rose Lyons – 46 Elton Drive, Ms. Lyons commented on the need to have communication between the Council and the various Boards and Commissions.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

A. Introduction (Tanya Lane, Acting Town Manager)

Acting Town Manager Lane indicated that various department heads will be in attendance to present their departments' duties and responsibilities.

Note: Presentations will be made available on the Town website: www.newingtonct.gov

B. Finance Department (Ann Harter, Director)

Discussion:

Deputy Mayor Klett remarked that she is glad the meeting is live so public can understand how this works. She noted that three members of the CIP Committee are in attendance and asked that the presentation be repeated at a CIP meeting.

Mayor Zartarian inquired about the possibility of the state taking over on motor vehicle taxes and inquired about how the process will take place? He inquired whether the process will be handled by local municipalities or the state. Finance Director Ann Harter replied that none of the process has been worked out; she assumes that the Town will still handle pricing and processing (sending and collecting bills. Mayor Zartarian inquired whether the Assessor is going to meet the revaluation deadline. Mrs. Harter replied in the affirmative.

Councilor Marocchini inquired about whether health benefit increases have to be the same for Town/BOE. Mrs. Harter replied in the negative and indicated that it is an actuarial calculation; increases may vary.

C. Human Services Department (Karen Futoma, Director)

Discussion:

None

D. Senior and Disabled Center (Dianne Stone, Director)

Discussion:

Deputy Mayor Klett indicated that Senior and Disabled Director Dianne Stone is well respected with state agencies. She indicated that 73% of people aged 55-64 still work and inquired whether consideration is being given to increase hours to those who work during the day. Ms. Stone replied that staff is looking at that now and is trying to determine who needs the Senior Center for what. She indicated that they are looking at hours and online resources to those who don't need to come into the center. Ms. Stone stated that there is not a lot of interest in evening hours, more interest in weekend.

E. Police Department (Stephen Clark, Chief)

Discussion:

Deputy Mayor Klett inquired about the backup plan for the 19 crossing guards. Chief Clark replied that there are substitutes; if no subs are available then a police officer will cover the post. Deputy Mayor Klett inquired whether Animal Control services are shared with Wethersfield. Chief Clark replied in the affirmative. Deputy Mayor Klett inquired about the the repeater site cost? Chief Clark indicated that the cost is about \$200,000 for equipment and a site needs to be found - needs to be high, on mountain is ideal. Deputy Mayor Klett suggested that the Town Manager look into possible sites and discusses this during the CIP process.

Deputy Mayor Klett remarked that she is happy to hear suggestions; such as the civilian evidence officer, possible discussion of deputy chief and/or captain, etc. She stated support for the deputy chief idea and stated that it should be discussed.

Councilor DelBuono expressed appreciation for the out of the box solutions for training and staffing. Looking forward to moving ahead. Councilor Marocchini stated that staff needs to grow to support training moving forward. He also indicated that he has received some complaints about the one-way window into dispatch center. Chief Clark replied that the window was put in place due to security and regulations of info that cannot be publically seen. Councilor Marocchini inquired about having a reception area. Chief Clark replied that the department uses signage but indicated that he will look into it. Councilor Anest stated that the window is intimidating and inquired whether the dispatch center may be reconfigured to. Chief Clark replied that the department looked into many options, but there are not many viable options for reconfiguring the center.

Councilor Nagel inquired about staffing levels. Chief Clark stated that there are currently 51 officers, with 3 in the police academy and one vacancy. Deputy Mayor Klett stated that the job of police officer has changed over the years: it is a different world and requirement for training have changed. She stated that the Town needs to keep up with the times. She stated that people want to live in a safe place.

Councilor Marocchini inquired about the open position. Chief Clark replied that there are applicants but he is but looking for a certain quality of officer and has high hiring standards.

F. Information Technology (Paul Boutot, Chief Information Officer)

Discussion:

Mayor Zartarian inquired about disaster recovery plans. Mr. Boutot indicated that he has worked with other towns, no fiber optic but have put a cloud component backup in this year's budget. He stated that he worked with other towns for backup if necessary, Manchester South Windsor, Bloomfield have similar environments, still requires to provision licenses, costs associated for duplicates. He said that the future will be cloud based solutions and there are many current cloud based programs in place, Building Dept. and Senior Center).

Mayor Zartarian inquired about open source alternatives which cost nothing. Mr. Boutot replied that this project is currently at the State level; if state starts at that level, we can look into. He stated that there are Issues with third party systems vendors, not supported open source systems (such as munis).

Deputy Mayor Klett stated that this is a great presentation and stated that things have evolved; she understands why positions are needed in IT department.

G. Parks & Recreation/Grounds (Bill DeMaio, Superintendent)

Discussion:

None

H. Highway Department (Tom Molloy, Superintendent)

Deputy Mayor Klett inquired as to whether the Town is monitoring trucking in oversized waste from out of town for curbside pickup. Mr. Molloy indicated that it is being addressed. He stated that Newington doesn't charge for curb sized collection, so it may be an issue but they keep records of who uses system. Mayor Zartarian inquired as to where leaves are trucked. Mr. Molloy replied that they are trucked to Farmington and stated that it costs a lot of money but there is, no way to get rid of them for free. He stated that they use hauling company, goes out to bid and part of the landfill redesign will be attempt to make in house topsoil

Councilor Manke remarked that the snowplow video shown during the presentation is important! Councilor Budrejko inquired about prioritizing street repairs. Mr. Molloy replied that the streets are selected through engineering, with his involvement. He stated that it is a very involved process based on inspections, software, considerations of population on street, mill and overlay vs. reconstruction. He

stated that he is confident with schedule and stated that there is only a certain amount of funding each year to stay current. Better than most towns, other must bond out.

Deputy Mayor Klett expressed concerns about sidewalk safety and inquired whether there is a process in place to identify sidewalks of a priority (for people with disability). Mr. Molloy replied in the affirmative and explained that he works with Engineering to do what they can with the budget. Deputy Mayor Klett stated that the Town needs to look at utilization by special needs people. Councilor Budrejko exited the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

The Council took a recess from 12:33 - 12:40 p.m.

I. Economic Development (Andy Brecher, Director)

Discussion:

Deputy Mayor Klett asked how many business are relocating within town, leaving other empty buildings. Mr. Brecher stated that there will never be 100% occupancy, only has a 4% vacancy rate, among the lowest in the state (average is 10%). Often when one moves out, someone moves in. Councilor Klett inquired as to who has notice when a business plans to leave and stated that it is important that Council knows when a business leaves. Mr. Brecher replied that the Town must be notified if a business with more than 50 employees leaves. Sometimes the Town finds out after the fact and businesses often give notice to employees before notifying town.

Councilor DelBuono inquired whether Mr. Brecher works on business retention in town. Mr. Brecher replied in the affirmative and elaborated that many businesses don't want to immediately go to commercial brokers, come to him to discuss strategic alternatives.

J. Library (Lisa Masten, Director)

Discussion:

Councilor Klett inquired as to why does Farmington not belong to the consortium. Mrs. Masten replied that she is not sure why and stated that it doesn't benefit community by pulling out – libraries are stronger as a group.

K. Additional Information/Wrap Up (Tanya Lane, Acting Town Manager)

Acting Town Manager Lane wrapped up the presentations and indicated that they will be placed on the Town website.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA

Hal Whitney, Old Hatchery Lane, Mr. Whitney thanked the Council for inviting the public and stated that he learned a lot. He stated that Bill DeMaio is a dynamic person and that Andy Brecher has done a tremendous job and is a hard worker. Does a great job for a part time person, but works more He stated that he loves the Library; it is the best in the State. He stated that the Library is second in importance to only the schools.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive, Ms. Lyons thanked the department heads, stating that she deals with every department and all go above and beyond to answer any questions. She remarked that transparency is occurring at these meetings but remarked that the sound system in the Helen Nelson Room makes it difficult to hear Board of Education meetings.

VI. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Deputy Mayor Klett thanked the members of the public who attended the goal setting sessions.

Councilor Anest stated that the Council set attainable goals and expressed confidence that the Council can obtain these goals. She recommended that the Council reviews its goals in 3 months.

Councilor Nagel indicated that he was pleased with session and remarked that it was very beneficial. Councilor Serra stated that the goals are attainable and that the Council needs to work to make them happen.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor DelBuono moved to adjourn at 2:07 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilor DelBuono. Motion passed 8 – 0 (Councilor Budrejko absent).

Respectfully Submitted,

Jaime Trevethan
Asst. to the Town Manager - Administration